

News Release



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Sussex County shares dollars with local police

GEORGETOWN, Del. – New police cruisers soon will be on patrol and state-of-the-art fingerprinting systems will be identifying criminals thanks to a Sussex County revenue-sharing program that more than half of the county's 20 municipal police departments are already making use of.

Sussex County Council, in June, set aside \$525,000 in the fiscal year 2006 budget for a revenue-sharing program with local police departments. Each of the county's 20 municipal police department is allowed up to \$25,000 through the program.

Money set aside for the program is coming through appropriated county reserves.

So far, nearly \$190,000 has been awarded to nine departments through the revenue-sharing program. On Tuesday, Sept. 27, County Council awarded another \$64,000 to some of those local departments and others for necessary crime-fighting tools.

The money can be used for capital expenditures – such as squad cars and surveillance equipment – purchased after July 1 of this year. Recipients thus far have included the towns of Bethany Beach, Blades, Bridgeville, Delmar, Georgetown, Greenwood, Fenwick Island, Lewes, Milton, Rehoboth Beach, Seaford and Selbyville.

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Sussex County Administrator Robert L. Stickels said the revenue-sharing program is another way of Sussex County working hand-in-hand with the local governments.

“On occasion, the local police departments provide service and respond to calls outside their jurisdictions – namely into the county,” Stickels said. “Recognizing that, the council wanted to establish a program that would offer them some financial assistance.”

The idea of sharing revenue is nothing new in Sussex County. The county already shares some costs with Delaware State Police in a contract that provides 28 additional state troopers to the county, at a cost to the county of approximately \$1.2 million annually.

That money is part of the \$17.5 million Sussex County set aside in the fiscal 2006 budget, money that will be dedicated to funding police, fire companies, paramedics and other emergency responders, Stickels said.

Local police agencies say they are helpful for the financial backup.

“This is absolutely a wonderful thing the county has done,” said Chief Gary Morris, whose Seaford Police Department is using its \$25,000 to buy and equip a new Ford Crown Victoria police cruiser. “We really do appreciate it.”

Chief Morris said many departments, which sometimes are strapped for cash, would use the added revenue to buy needed cruisers. In Seaford’s case, Morris said the additional vehicle will give Seaford a total of seven patrol cars. The addition will mean others in the fleet can be rotated out of service more often to save wear-and-tear.

Rehoboth Beach Chief Keith Banks, whose police department has used a portion of its \$25,000 for a new cruiser, said the revenue-sharing program highlights the kind of good working relationship local and county governments can have.

“I think this shows a team working together,” Banks said.

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